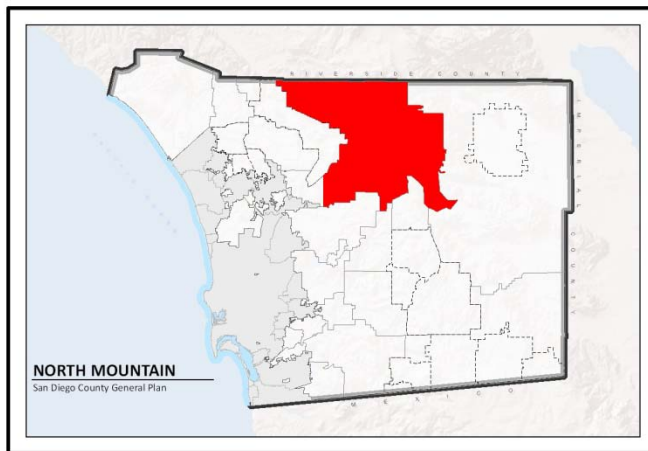

North Mountain Subregional Plan

San Diego County General Plan



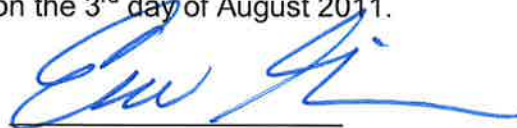
Adopted
January 3, 1979
GPA 78-03

Adopted
August 3, 2011

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CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that this Plan, consisting of text and exhibits, is the North Mountain Subregional and is a part of the San Diego County General Plan, and that it was considered by the San Diego County Planning Commission during nine hearings that occurred from November 6, 2009 through the 20th day of August 2010, and adopted by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on the 3rd day of August 2011.



Attest:

ERIC GIBSON, Director
Department of Planning and Land Use

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NORTH MOUNTAIN SUBREGIONAL PLAN

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The term "goal" as used herein refers to aims and purposes that are general and timeless, and do not readily lend themselves to measurement.

The term "policy", as used herein, refers to those principles that guide the allocation of County resources toward prescribed outcomes consistent with the goals.

The goals and policies that follow reflect a thoughtful analysis by the North Mountain Community Planning Organizations. They are a statement by the citizens and the County Board of Supervisors as to the kind of total living environment that should be achieved.

It is recognized that legal and economic limitations may hinder the complete attainment of these goals. The fact that the goals may not be completely achieved should in no way hinder every effort to achieve them to the greatest extent possible.

There are seven elements of the General Plan. They are Land Use, Housing, Mobility, Safety, Noise, Conservation, and Open Space (combined), and Noise. .

The purpose of addressing these elements within this plan is to ensure that the goals and policies formulated by the Subregion will be compatible with those found in the General Plan, or, if conflicts exist, they can be readily identified and reconciled. In addition, some policies found in the General Plan elements can be more relevant for one community than for others, and further elaboration or refinement may be appropriate in one case, while in another the existing policies might be adequate.

The policies contained in this subregional plan should be regarded as applications of broad General Plan policies, which have been designed to fit the specific or unique circumstances existing in the individual communities.

NOTE:

This Subregional Plan is presented in two sections at this time. This section provides subregional-level findings, goals, and policies. In addition, there are community-specific findings, goals, and policies for all communities, except Greater Warner Springs, which is presented in a separate document. Ultimately, these two sections will be merged into a single document.

1. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

GOAL

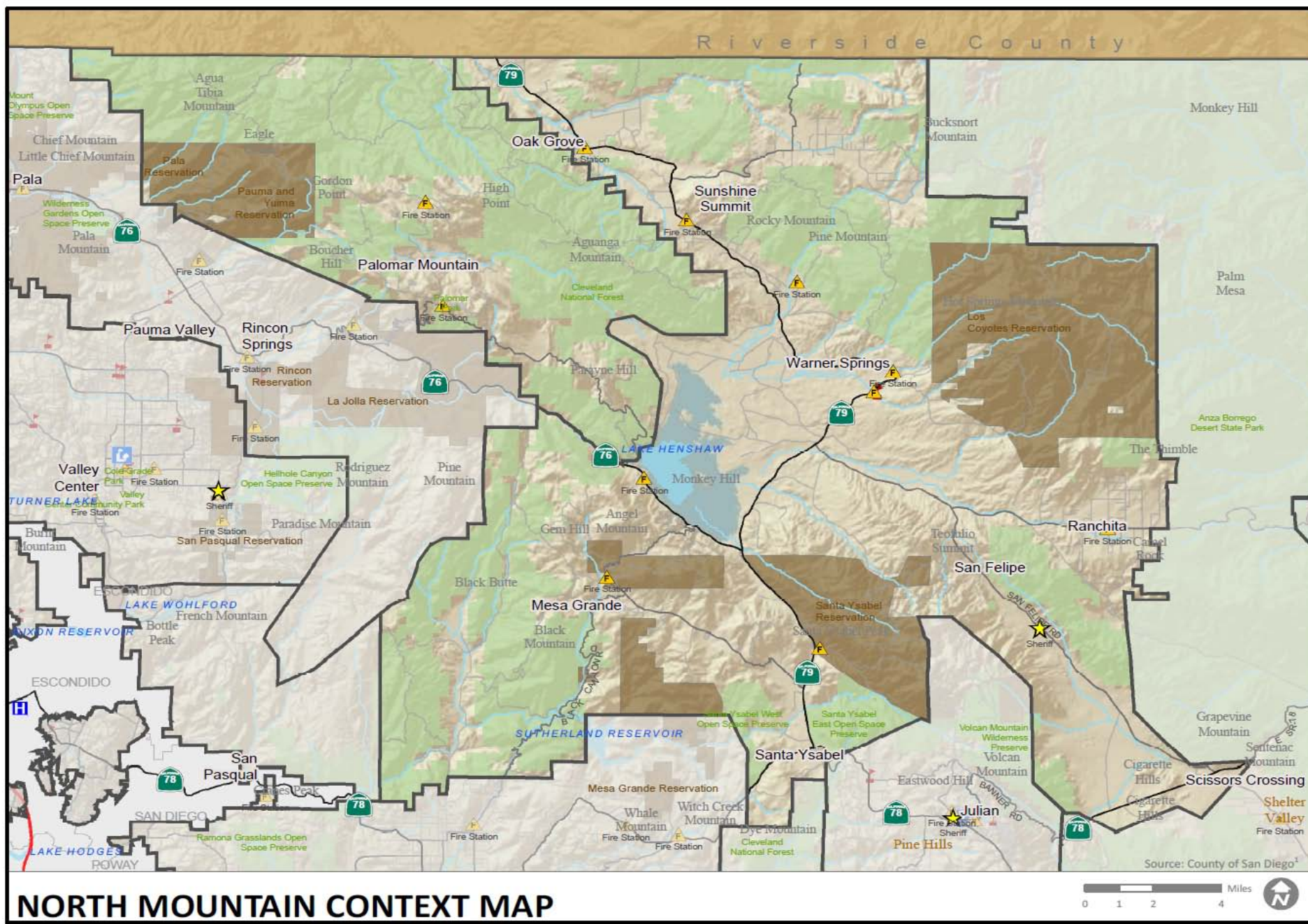
THE PRESERVATION OF THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTINCT INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITIES IN THE SUBREGION, ALONG WITH THE NATURAL AMBIENCE OF MOUNTAINS, HILLS, AND VALLEYS.

FINDINGS

The North Mountain Subregion is characterized by vast open expanses of land and scattered rural residential development. Much of the land is held in private ownership including Agricultural Preserves, tribal lands, and public domain. Rural communities include Santa Ysabel, Warner Springs, Palomar Mountain, Mesa Grande, Sunshine Summit, Ranchita, and Oak Grove. (See Figure 1 on page 3) Each community is distinctly different, but common to all is the pursuit of a rural lifestyle.

The community of Palomar Mountain is located in the mountains in the northwest portion of the Subregion. Dense forests of coniferous and deciduous trees provide the mountain ambience, which defines the community character of Palomar Mountain. The residential areas first experienced significant development in the early 1900's, and some of the older cabins and other structures still survive. Today, the mountain supports both full- and part-time residents, resulting in a mixture of types and sizes of residences, as well as the internationally renowned Palomar Mountain Observatory. Palomar Mountain is a unique historical area, because its pristine beauty has been preserved, in part, by the presence of the State Park system, Federal Forest lands, California Institute of Technology, and to a greater extent by the settlers, old and new, who have raised each generation to have respect and dedication for its character and who have been dedicated over the years to maintain the beauty and quality of the mountain.

The communities of Santa Ysabel and Sunshine Summit are smaller commercial areas that serve a scattered population in the surrounding rural areas. Both are located along state highways and have large stands of oak and eucalyptus trees. These trees are important visual resources that distinguish these communities from their surroundings. Chihuahua Valley and Ranchita are primarily low-density residential areas located in isolated valleys, which support a relatively concentrated population. The remainder of the Subregion includes Aguanga, Oak Grove, Lake Henshaw, San Felipe, and Mesa Grande. All share the common trait of scattered low-density residential with limited commercial development.



San Diego County General Plan

Figure 1

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POLICIES

1. Conserve forests of coniferous and deciduous trees to maintain the mountain ambience that defines the community character of Palomar Mountain. [PP]
2. Preserve the rural character by discouraging required urban-scale improvements, such as sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and street lighting, where the public health, safety and welfare are not endangered. [PP]
3. Require development to provide for two replacement trees for each tree removed at appropriate locations elsewhere on the subject property. [PP]
4. Require revegetation and landscaping of all manufactured slopes in graded areas subject to a Grading Permit, Major Use Permit or Site Plan that will be altered by development. Use native or naturalizing plants to blend with existing topography. [PP]
5. On-site commercial signage that requires a sign permit shall comply with the following criteria: [PP, C]
 - a. Sign types shall be limited to monument and facade signs.
 - b. Signs shall be designed to visually blend with the site and the surrounding environment by considering the following characteristics:
 - (1) Size, bulk, and height of sign is subordinate to the nearest structure.
 - (2) Construction materials and color of the sign are compatible with the use and structure proposed and surrounding landscape.
 - (3) Signs shall not block significant off-site views.

2. LAND USE

GENERAL GOAL

LAND USE WITHIN THE NORTH MOUNTAIN SUBREGION SHALL RETAIN AND ENHANCE THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY.

FINDINGS

In the North Mountain Subregion, the Semi-Rural and Rural Lands Regional Categories have been applied, because the land is primarily agricultural and unimproved with remote pockets of residential development. The land use pattern is one of scattered low-density residential development generally centered around remote rural communities with some commercial development. The dominant geographical features in the Subregion are large, mostly undeveloped valleys and surrounding mountains. These vast open spaces are largely the result of large ownerships, such as the private lands, Cleveland National Forest, Vista Irrigation District, and Indian Reservations.

Santa Ysabel

The County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) has determined that groundwater in the general vicinity of the intersection of State Routes 78 and 79 in Santa Ysabel have been contaminated by gasoline from leaking underground storage tanks. Because of this condition, the area within a 750 foot radius of this intersection is an area of concern in which any application for development of a well will be reviewed by the County DEH.

POLICIES

General

1. Prohibit both private and public developments that require extensive and severe grading. [PP]
2. Require development to demonstrate compliance with Conservation and Open Space Element Policies COS-4.4 and 5.3 and that the groundwater supply will not be adversely impacted. [DPLU, DHHS]
3. Require lot sizes greater than two acres when subdividing land within Rural Lands Regional Categories using the preservation of open space or agriculture with the utilization of Lot Area Averaging, Planned Residential Developments or Specific Plans to maintain the existing rural character, protect steep slopes, and preserve and protect open space and agriculture. [PP]
4. Discourage the type of development which would result in traffic volumes that would adversely impact local communities. [AP, PP]
5. Encourage preservation of areas with rare, unique, or endangered wildlife and plants. [PP]

Palomar Mountain

6. Require development to be designed in a manner that is compatible with neighboring uses and rural-mountainous character of the Palomar Mountain area. The following criteria shall be considered in the review of such proposed developments: [PP, DPW]
 - a. Site design that includes landscaping utilizing native and naturalizing vegetation species of trees and shrubs.
 - b. Structures that utilize building styles and materials common to the Palomar area and similar mountain communities.
 - c. Noise minimized by site design and building techniques that reduce the ambient noise level at adjacent properties to, at, or below minimum County standards.
 - d. Drainage improvements maintained in as natural a state as possible to meet the minimum standard of capacity required to protect the public health and safety.
 - e. Required open space standards shall not be met by utilizing required front or exterior side yard, parking lots, and driveways.
7. Encourage a groundwater study for the Palomar Mountain area directed by the County Groundwater Hydrologist that shall be completed after the study is authorized and funding approved by the Board of Supervisors. [AP]

Santa Ysabel

8. Seek local, state, and federal funding opportunities to expedite cleanup of hazardous waste contamination in Santa Ysabel. [GEN]
9. Require development projects proposed within 2,000 feet of the intersection of State Routes 78 and 79 to ensure that groundwater contamination has not occurred. [DEH, PP]

RESIDENTIAL GOAL

THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE RURAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE NORTH MOUNTAIN SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

Outside Rural Village boundaries, the North Mountain Subregion is generally characterized by large lot single-family residential development or generally undeveloped grasslands, open spaces, and mountains. (The Greater Warner Springs Rural Village is shown on Figure 1 on page 3)

The North Mountain Subregion is expected to grow from its present population of approximately 3,187 persons¹ to 4,255 persons² by the year 2030. There appears

¹ SANDAG Profile Warehouse — <http://profilewarehouse.sandag.org/profiles/est/cocpa1951est.pdf>, August 2010

to be sufficient land area and density to more than accommodate the projected growth in the Subregion. Some areas such as Sunshine Summit and Santa Ysabel may support limited future growth and development and, in the future, may be good locations for Rural Village Boundaries. (Refer to Figure 3 on the page 9 for North Mountain Rural Village Boundaries)

POLICIES

1. Design and construct roads in the Subregion to minimize cut and fill areas and follow the natural terrain, whenever feasible. [DPW, PP]
2. Require development to:
 - Limit grading of residential areas by avoiding steep slopes;
 - Conform to the existing natural terrain by designing structures that conform to the slope and minimize cut and fill areas; and
 - Eliminate hill-topping and the filling of canyons. [PP]

² SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast for 2030, February 2010

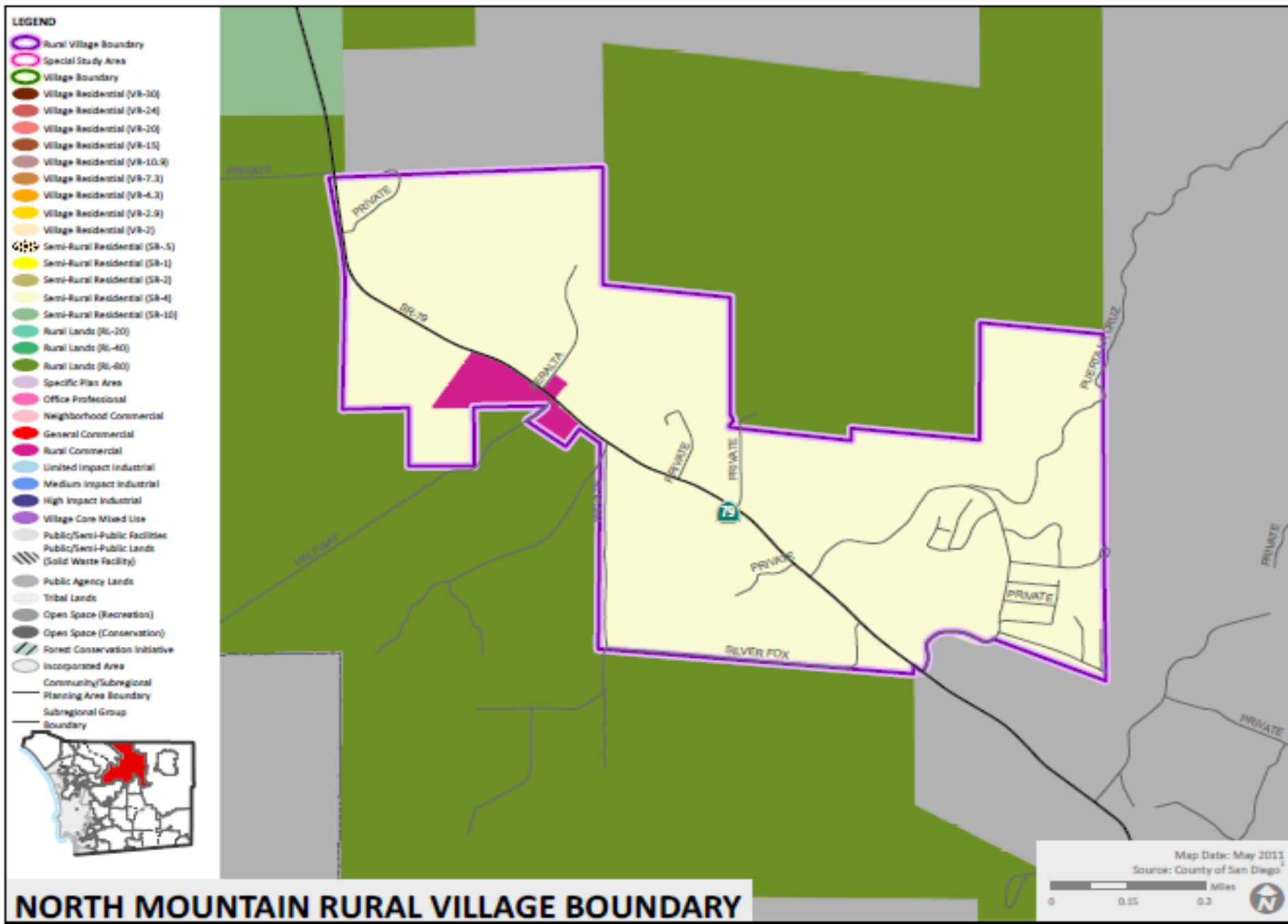


Figure 2

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COMMERCIAL GOAL

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT AND EMPHASIZES THOSE SERVICES DESIRED BY THE SUBREGION'S RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

FINDINGS

There are scattered highway-oriented commercial uses throughout the Subregion that provide services to local residents. In the Palomar Mountain and Santa Ysabel areas, several commercial uses are oriented to serving the mountain areas visitors.

Certain types of uses approved by discretionary permits require extensive additional supporting infrastructure, allow intensive use of a site by large numbers of people, and create increased automobile traffic. These types of land uses require improved roads and intersections, increased snow removal demand, extensive package treatment plant or septic facilities, additional wells, parking lots, gutters, curbs, sidewalks, lodging, and commercial services. Such intensity is incompatible with the surrounding rural residential area and mixed coniferous forest ecosystem of Palomar Mountain.

POLICIES

General

1. Limit new commercial areas to sites within the Rural Village boundaries, except highway-related uses. [PP]
2. Prohibit commercial development and activities that generate visual unsightliness, excessive noise, unpleasant odors, light pollution, air pollution, and health hazards. [PP]
3. Commercial activities shall be limited to commercial areas. [PP]
4. Encourage property owners to upgrade existing commercial uses by requiring landscaping as a condition for approval of future discretionary permits affecting these properties. [PP]
5. Prohibit the construction of paved sidewalks, curbs, and gutters in commercial areas, unless necessary for public health and safety. [PP]

Palomar Mountain

6. In the Palomar Mountain area, transient habitation uses should be limited to campgrounds and lodging. [PP]

AGRICULTURAL GOAL

AGRICULTURE WITHIN THE NORTH MOUNTAIN SUBREGION THAT IS MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED.

FINDINGS

Most of the privately-owned lands in the North Mountain Subregional Area are zoned as agricultural. Much of this land is undeveloped or is in residential use. A large portion of the agricultural area is designated under the Rural Lands Regional Category. The major agricultural uses in the Subregion are cattle grazing and dairies. Other agricultural pursuits in the Subregion are limited by the lack of imported water and irrigation facilities. In addition, a large portion of the Subregion is National Forest.

POLICIES

1. Encourage agricultural expansion in such a manner that conserves water resources. [AWM, DPLU, DEH]
2. Encourage the use of agricultural contracts to provide and conserve open space areas. [AWM, PP]

INDUSTRIAL GOAL

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT LIMITED TO THOSE USES THAT ARE COMPATIBLE WITH RURAL CHARACTER OF THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

Remoteness from urban centers, transportation, and utility service availability are constraints to industrial development in the Subregion. As a result, the area is expected to attract very little industrial development. However, excessive noise, light pollution, adverse visual impacts, and environmental impacts associated with some types of industrial development could alter the rural character of the area.

POLICIES

1. Support limited industrial development that can operate in harmony with a rural area without noise, light pollution, smoke, odors, heavy traffic, or other nuisances. [PP]

(Included in Greater Warner Springs Community Plan)

3. CONSERVATION

GENERAL GOAL

THE CAREFUL MANAGEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES IN THE SUBREGION TO PREVENT WASTEFUL EXPLOITATION OR DEGRADATION OF THOSE RESOURCES, AND TO PRESERVE RESOURCES FOR FUTURE USE.

FINDINGS

Conservation may be defined as the planned management, preparation, and wise utilization of natural resources. Because of the local significance of these resources within the planning area, conservation is the main thrust of the North Mountain Subregional Plan.

The County Board of Supervisors has adopted Resource Conservation Areas (RCA) for a number of communities within San Diego County. These RCAs identify lands that possess significant natural resources, which require special attention so that they can be preserved or utilized in a manner best satisfying public or private objectives.

RCAs are designed to identify sensitive resources and are not intended to restrict development rights or to further extend the restrictions that are normally applied to development of all real property within the County of San Diego.

The North Mountain Subregion contains large expanses of land with varying natural resources. These resources, in their natural states, provide habitats for a rich variety of plants and animals, as well as scenic beauty for area residents.

POLICIES

1. Resource Conservation Areas are identified in Appendix A. [AP]

WATER GOAL

ADEQUATE WATER SUPPLIES AVAILABLE FOR THE LAND USES ESTABLISHED BY THIS COMMUNITY PLAN.

FINDINGS

Water is the single most important natural resource for the future well-being of the residents of the North Mountain Subregion. Residents rely solely on groundwater from local wells for their water supply. Groundwater conditions are varied across the Subregion. Areas in the upper elevations, like Palomar Mountain and Volcan Mountain, boast higher rainfall averages creating a significant groundwater resource. Over the mountains, the eastern rain shadowed communities have less significant groundwater resources due to reduced precipitation. In the center of the Subregion, the Vista Irrigation District maintains Lake Henshaw, which supplies water to Vista and Escondido. Regardless of the varying groundwater conditions, groundwater availability is limited due to the presence of granitic rock

over most of the Subregion. Groundwater collects in fractures that occur in granitic rocks, which thus limits area of storage.

Palomar Mountain Area

Palomar Mountain is totally dependent on the local finite groundwater resource. No imported water is available now, or is anticipated to be available in the future.

Existing companies export spring water from Palomar Mountain. Local regulations do not apply to private extract of spring water for use on Palomar Mountain and its effect on the groundwater supply is unknown. Export of groundwater would require a Major Use Permit and analysis of its impact on groundwater supplies.

To protect this groundwater resource, it is important to ensure that the total amount of extraction does not exceed the amount of average annual groundwater recharge. Groundwater recharge has been conservatively estimated at 0.15 acre-feet per acre per year for the Palomar area. If a long term overdraft condition is to be avoided, then the rate of extraction must remain less than the rate of recharge.

The rate of extraction is estimated at 0.5 acre feet (163,000 gallons) of water per year per household. Thus, if an overdraft condition is to be avoided, then the housing density/extraction rate must be less than the recharge rate for the area.

The numbers (recharge rate and consumption rate) indicate that the overall density must not exceed one dwelling unit per 3.3 acres ($0.5/0.15$); however, large areas on the Mountain are public lands that may never be developed. These areas do help the overall water picture for the mountain and allow additional recharge without adding any extraction.

Remainder of North Mountain Area:

Communities east of Lake Henshaw rely on groundwater extracted from fractured rock aquifers. These systems provide limited storage, which is further limited by reduced rainfall amounts.

Warner Springs receives 14 to 18 inches of precipitation per year. Groundwater recharge has been estimated at 0.08 acre-feet per acre per year. In order to maintain groundwater resources, the rate of extraction must not exceed the rate of recharge. Based on water usage of 0.5 acre-feet (163,000 gallons per household), overall density should not exceed one dwelling unit per 6.3 acres ($0.5/0.08$).

Ranchita receives 12 to 15 inches of rainfall per year. Groundwater recharge is estimated at .06 acre-feet per acre per year. Based on these estimated, overall density should be consistent with ($0.5/0.06$) 1 dwelling unit per 8.3 acres. This does not mean that parcel size must always be greater than 8.3 acre, but overall density should not exceed this number. Large areas in the planning region are public lands that will never be developed. These areas allow additional recharge without extraction.

POLICIES

1. Groundwater levels should be monitored in the Subregion. [PP]
2. Cumulative effects of new development should be carefully regulated and the quality of groundwater constantly monitored. [PP]
3. Groundwater recharge activities should be increased by encouraging the retention of agricultural ponds and other water bodies to increase infiltration. [AWM, PP]
4. Cumulative effects of numerous septic tanks on water quality should be monitored. [DEH,]

VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE GOAL

THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT WITHIN THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

A wide variety of biological resources exist within the North Mountain Subregion. Of the seven native plant communities identified in the Plan Area, three represent significant natural resources - coniferous forest/woodland, riparian woodland, and meadow/grassland.

Coniferous forest is most notable for it represents only 2.9% of San Diego County vegetation. These significant habitats are uncommon in arid San Diego County and often support rare and endangered plants and animals.

Approximately 13% of the Subregion is covered by Montane Coniferous Forest. This vegetation is limited to the higher elevations on Palomar Mountain and Volcan Mountain. Sensitive mammal and reptilian species, such as the California mountain king snake (*Lampropeltis zonata pulchra*), and the mountain lion (*Felix concolor*), are known to occur in coniferous forest areas throughout the Subregion.

Grassland vegetation covers 15% of the North Mountain Subregion, most notably the vast Henshaw Basin east of Lake Henshaw. Biologically, grasslands are very important because they provide foraging areas for raptor species and other predators. The grasslands adjacent to Lake Henshaw contain habitat for sensitive species like the Stephens kangaroo rat, (*Dipodomys Stephens*).

Meadows and riparian habitat are also uncommon habitat in San Diego County due to the arid climate. Riparian meadow habitat supports a variety of sensitive plant species, as well as prime feeding grounds for mammal and avian species.

Chaparral/scrub habitats are ecologically significant and are abundant in the North Mountain Subregion. Continued brushing and grading associated with development throughout the County is contributing to the decline of these regionally significant habitats.

POLICIES

1. Encourage removal of diseased trees through cooperation between the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, United States Forest Service, and private property owners.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY GOAL

THE PROTECTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES AS PROVIDED BY STATE LAW.

FINDINGS

The North Mountain Subregional Planning Area was previously occupied by the Cupeno and Kumeyaay or Diegueno people, until being displaced during the 19th century by Europeans.

Riparian and southern oak woodland plant communities served as rich food resource areas and centers for habitation. Rock outcrops in or around oak woodland areas were frequently used as grinding sites.

Due to the nature of early Indian technology, certain areas within the Subregion (particularly those on high ground near running water and oak groves) have a high potential for significant archaeological sites.

POLICIES

Refer to the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan.

MINERALS GOAL

THE JUDICIOUS EXTRACTION OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND RECLAMATION OF ABANDONED MINERAL OPERATIONS THAT MEET STATE REQUIREMENTS.

FINDINGS

Gem quality tourmaline and topaz are the primary valuable minerals known to exist within the Subregion.

POLICIES

1. Encourage the U.S. Forest Service to retain its land where mineral deposits or mining claims occur. [GEN]
2. Privately-owned mining operations should employ environmentally sound extraction techniques. [PP]

TIMBER GOAL

NEW DEVELOPMENTS DESIGNED TO PROTECT TIMBER RESOURCES.

FINDINGS

Timber resources in the North Mountain Subregion are of value primarily for aesthetic purposes.

POLICIES

1. Encourage selective cutting, regeneration and protection of timber resources. [PP]

DARK SKY GOAL

THE CONTINUED ASTRONOMICAL RESEARCH AND EXPLORATION BY THE PALOMAR MOUNTAIN OBSERVATORY.

FINDINGS

The California Institute of Technology established the Palomar Observatory on Palomar Mountain in 1934, because of the area's climate and dark skies, which favored astronomical research.

Growth is closing in around the observatory as urban centers in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties have experienced both intensified urban growth and continuing suburban sprawl.

One of the side effects of growth is increased light pollution. Light pollution is light, shining upward from a wide range of sources that illuminate suspended dust particles in the atmosphere. Some of this light is then reflected downward toward the ground.

In order to maintain astronomical research at the observatory in the future, regulation of both the sources of light and growth that create new light sources is needed.

The most effective way of mitigating light pollution is through a combined strategy of low density land uses, strict enforcement of the County Light Pollution Code (Sections 6900 and 7041, et al. San Diego County Code), further restrictions on major light producing land uses, and education of the general public to use an absolute minimum of lighting during the evening hours.

POLICIES

1. Encourage all residents to use an absolute minimum of lighting during the hours of darkness. [GEN]
2. Discourage activities that require outdoor lighting or require additional traffic circulation after dark to, from, or upon Palomar Mountain. [DPW, PP]
3. Require development to evaluate site specific issues concerning the transmission of any form of airborne particulate matter that may become suspended in the atmosphere. PP

4. OPEN SPACE

GOAL

THE PRESERVATION AND CAREFUL MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACE.

FINDINGS

Open space is the primary factor contributing to the North Mountain Subregional Planning Area's rural character. Neighborhoods are well defined by large expanses of intervening undeveloped areas. Pressures to develop these resources or the locations where they exist is not as great in the Subregion as in other more accessible areas of the County. However, demand is rising, and local open space is of sufficiently high quality in the Subregion that protection is warranted.

POLICIES

1. Encourage cooperation between all levels of government and private organizations in the areas of management, conservation, and protection of open space. [GEN]
2. Integrate open space dedications in private developments with surrounding uses to maximize a functional open space/recreation and wildlife management system. [PP, DPR]

5. NOISE

GOAL

ADEQUATE CONTROL OF NOISE SOURCES IN THE SUBREGION THAT MAINTAINS AN ENVIRONMENT FREE OF EXCESSIVE AND DAMAGING NOISE FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

FINDINGS

An important aspect of the rural character of the Subregion is its peace and quiet. The low density, rural nature of the area results in less background noise than is associated with urban areas. Noise that is generated can travel great distances and is more noticeable and potentially irritating to residents. Site planning and architectural design of new structures can assist in mitigating noise impacts to residents.

POLICIES

1. Encourage the Forest Service, State Parks Department, and County Parks and Recreation Department to provide a buffer strip, natural landscaping screening, and any other site design criteria that can minimize noise impacts to adjacent residential areas from forest and park users. [DPR]
2. All development requiring discretionary approval shall require design review for mitigation of noise impacts generated on the subject property. [PP]

6. PUBLIC SAFETY AND SEISMIC SAFETY

SAFETY GOAL

THE FACILITIES AND LEVEL OF SERVICE NECESSARY TO PROTECT THE RESIDENTS OF THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

Because the North Mountain Subregion supports extensive chaparral, forested mountains, and grassland valleys, it is an area of extremely high fire potential with scattered fire protection service.

The United States Forest Service (USFS) and California Division of Forestry (CDF) provide wildlands fire protection 24 hours a day during the fire season from April through December. During the period of January through March, service is provided 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Because their equipment and training emphasize wildlands fire protection, the USFS and CDF rarely attempt structural fire protection. The USFS has stations at Lake Henshaw, Oak Grove, Palomar Mountain, and CDF facilities are located at Warner Springs and Pauma Valley, which serve the area.

Structural fire protection has been provided by volunteer fire departments in Palomar Mountain, Ranchita, Sunshine Summit, and Julian. Protection of the residents, visitors, and natural resources of the Subregion demands improved fire services.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage controlled burning or mechanical brush thinning to reduce the fire hazard. [AP, FM]
2. Encourage the education of property owners and visitors as to the value of brush clearance and shaded fuel breaks. [AP, FM, CE]
3. Promote educational programs that encourage residents to name private roads and driveways and post street numbers on gates in order to improve emergency response of fire, sheriff, and ambulance. [AP, SHER, FM, DPW]
4. Encourage all forms of water storage, including: agricultural ponds; recreation ponds at public parks; readily available water for fire fighting in subdivisions and public parks; and exploration of mandatory reserves in tanks for neighborhood water distribution. [AP, , DPR, DPW]
5. Require development to provide standardized hardware for all connections provided for fire fighting use. [FM, PP]
6. Design and maintain trails and staging areas to address fire safety. [DPR, AP]

7. Require hazardous land uses, such as propane storage yards, individual propane tanks, gas stations, and locations that operate outdoor stationary machinery, to be properly cleared and equipped with fire extinguishers. [DHS, FM, PP]
8. Encourage shaded fuelbreaks and other forms of vegetation management to reduce fire damage. [AP, FM, PP]

CRIME SAFETY GOAL

SHERIFF PROTECTION SERVICE THAT ADEQUATELY MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

The crime rate in the Subregion is relatively low today, but the possibility exists that crime rates will increase with population growth. Primary offenses are burglary and theft, with the large number of vacation homes, which are usually vacant during mid-week and in winter being ready targets. Large parcel sizes also contribute to burglary potential, as most homes are not visible from street or neighboring yards.

Police protection is provided to the North Mountain Subregion by the Rural Law Enforcement Division of the County Sheriff. This division serves an area of 2,600 square miles; from the Riverside County line south to the Mexican border and from I-15 to the Imperial County line. Rural law enforcement consists of 19 resident deputies, each deputy serving 150 square miles. The North Mountain area is served by two substations, one in Julian and the other in Valley Center, and two offices, Ranchita and Warner Springs.

CODE POLICIES

1. Encourage the provision of a resident deputy to serve village areas along with a back-up system to respond to all calls for service in the North Mountain Area where the resident deputy is off-duty or unavailable. [SHER]

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE GOAL

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE TO THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

Ambulance service for the subregion is provided by the Rural Law Enforcement Division of the Sheriff's Department. Deputies and volunteer fire department personnel are trained as emergency medical technicians (EMT), which is a lower level of training than a Paramedic. The cost of training and equipment for paramedic services is much greater than EMT services. As population increases and demographic changes occur, the increased demand for services will result in a need to provide full-time ambulance services.

POLICIES

Refer to Goals and Policies in the Safety Element under the Law Enforcement Section.

SEISMIC SAFETY

GOAL

PROMOTE PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF POTENTIAL SEISMIC HAZARDS IN THE SUBREGION AND ENSURE THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OBSERVES THE LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY THESE HAZARDS.

FINDINGS

Damage from seismic and other geologic activity is ever present and inevitable in Southern California. In the North Mountain Subregion, seismic risk is high due to the presence of the Elsinore Fault and other related faults. The San Jacinto fault zone is located just outside the plan area and may pose a threat to the eastern portions of the Subregion. Landslides, rockfall, fires, and liquefaction can be triggered by earthquake activity under the proper conditions, which may pose future hazards to residents. Much of the impending earthquake related damage and loss of life can, however, be prevented if good planning, sensible development,, and construction practices are adhered to. Additional research needs to be completed in the Subregion to gain a more complete understanding of the fault systems in order to fully evaluate the degree of risk posed by earthquake activity.

Based on the most current information available an updated fault map has been prepared for the North Mountain Subregion showing all known actual faults.

POLICIES

1. If a potentially significant seismic risk is shown to exist, then a geologic report shall be required. [PP]

7. CIRCULATION

GENERAL GOAL

A CONVENIENT, SAFE, AND BALANCED CIRCULATION SYSTEM IN THE SUBREGION THAT MAINTAINS ITS RURAL ATMOSPHERE AND NATURAL BEAUTY.

FINDINGS

The North Mountain Subregion is served by a road network consisting of two-lane State Highways and local County roads. All of the area's centers of population have access to this network. There are two primary routes linking metropolitan San Diego with the Subregion: State Highways 78 and 79, which merge in Santa Ysabel. Principal County roads in the Subregion are San Felipe Road, Montezuma Valley Road, Chihuahua Valley Road, Mesa Grande Road, East Grade Road, and South Grade Road. State Route 76 provides access between Lake Henshaw, Palomar Mountain, Pauma Valley, and points west.

Secondary access is a major concern in populated areas, such as regional parks. Under emergency conditions, evacuations of residents and access by emergency vehicles is restricted where only one road exists. The situation is particularly serious for the residents living in the Bailey Meadow and Birch Hill Crestline Areas of Palomar Mountain, and visitors of Palomar Mountain State Park.

Increases in regional recreational travel and local growth are reflected in local traffic patterns. Traffic on steeper portions of the State Highways throughout the Subregion may be congested because of slow moving vehicles, but turnout and passing lanes would help to alleviate this problem.

Direct residential access is provided to State roads through the North Mountain Subregion with many driveways adjoining these routes. As traffic increases on these highways, cars transitioning to and from a growing number of access points will add to the traffic hazards, congestion, and accidents.

POLICIES

1. Encourage off-street parking in the Rural Village Boundaries and other
2. Provide turnouts and parking facilities on major roadways at scenic viewpoints adjacent to lands in public ownership and not those in private ownership, wherever feasible. [DPW]
3. Provide passing lanes, turnouts, and left turn pockets on major roadways, wherever feasible. They should be well marked, of adequate length, and located to ensure traffic safety. [DPW, PP]
4. Design roads to follow natural contours, avoid grid pattern streets, minimize cuts and fills, and the disturbance of natural rock outcroppings and trees, wherever possible. [DPW, PP]

5. Minimize urban improvements, such as vertical berms, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, to preserve the rural atmosphere of the community. [DPW, PP]
6. Encourage the retention of existing or potential expansion of public transportation between the North Mountain Subregion, tribal areas and the San Diego Metropolitan area. [PP, DPW]
7. Encourage increased sight-distance, improved shoulders to facilitate emergency parking, and other major realignments by the State along portions of Highways 76, 78, and 79 to improve traffic flow, promote safety, and reduce traffic accidents. [DPW, PP]
8. As traffic flows through, town sites becomes hazardous or unreasonably congested. Solutions to smoother circulation should be determined jointly by the California Department of Transportation, County Planning Department, and affected Planning and Sponsor Groups. [DPW, PP]
9. Businesses locating along a state highway should coordinate the use of well-marked driveways. [DPW, PP]
10. Encourage establishment of speed limit signs on curves of County Highways S-6 and S-7 to enable strict enforcement of speed limits. [DPW, SHER]

8. PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Local governments or districts have a responsibility to provide certain public services and facilities to the general public. In the North Mountain Subregion, the services provided are: schools, solid waste disposal, and road maintenance. Some services provided to the area by the County are located outside of the Subregion, such as jail facilities, libraries, and other administrative services. At present levels of population, the demand for these services is insufficient to locate these facilities within the Subregion. Services, such as sewer and imported water, are not provided to the Subregion due to the low population, the lack of demand, and high cost of extending such services to the back country area.

SCHOOLS

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES GOAL

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES MAXIMIZED FOR ALL AGE GROUPS THROUGH A HIGH STANDARD OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES.

FINDINGS

The North Mountain Subregion has one school district located entirely within its boundaries, the Warner Union School District. The surrounding subregions have five schools that also serve the Subregion: Julian Union High School, Spencer Valley School, Fallbrook Union High School, Julian Elementary, and Palomar Mountain School.

The Pauma School District operates Palomar Mountain School, which serves grades K-8. Warner Union serves grades K-8, and currently has approximately 200 students, which is below capacity. All students attending grades 9-12 are bussed to the High Schools listed above, which are located outside of the Subregion.

POLICIES

1. Promote the use of school sites as community centers. [GEN]

WATER SUPPLY GOAL

ADEQUATE WATER SERVICE FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

The North Mountain Subregion water supply is generated from groundwater. Water companies with districts in this area include:

1. Palomar Mountain Mutual Water Company,
2. Bailey Mutual Water Company, and
3. Los Tules Mutual Water Company.

To the south and west of Warner Springs Ranch in the Henshaw Basin, are approximately 43,000 acres of well fields owned by the Vista Irrigation District.

Groundwater is pumped into Lake Henshaw and then released into the upper San Luis Rey River and is transported downstream to the Escondido Mutual Water Company and the Vista Irrigation District.

POLICIES

1. Reuse treated effluent for agricultural purposes; only when determined to be safe by the County Health Department outside the Palomar Mountain Area. [AWM, PP]
2. Encourage the North Mountain area water districts to establish and maintain an organization whose purpose would be the exchange of information on operations, maintenance, techniques, management, emergencies, fire water storage, water conservation, and other duties as warranted. [GEN]

SOLID WASTE

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL GOAL

ADEQUATE SOLID WASTE SERVICES AND FACILITIES NECESSARY TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

The North Mountain Subregion presently has bin-transfer sites at Palomar Mountain and Ranchita. Solid waste is hauled from the Subregion to the nearest landfill, which is located in Ramona.

POLICIES

1. Encourage the continuation of the present landfill site in Ramona. [DPW]

ROAD SERVICES

GOAL

THE LEVEL OF SERVICE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN SAFE ROADS AND HIGHWAYS IN THE SUBREGION.

FINDINGS

The County Department of Public Works is responsible for road maintenance services to the unincorporated areas. Road maintenance services are provided to all communities in the Subregion. If residents demand a higher level of maintenance, they must hold an election and form a special taxing district to tax themselves to finance this increased level of service.

POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage and assist local residents in the formation of a special district to provide road maintenance and improvement services. [DGS]

9. RECREATION

GOAL

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS AND ENRICH THE LIVES OF ALL RESIDENTS THROUGH A BALANCED SYSTEM OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

FINDINGS

The North Mountain Subregion contains large acreages of public lands, much of which is available for public recreational use. The Subregion contains approximately 112,400 acres of Cleveland National Forest lands and 6,045 acres of regional park lands, including Palomar Mountain County Park, Palomar Mountain State Park, and the Lake Henshaw recreation area.

The estimated 2010 population for the Subregion is 3,187³ and the 2030 forecasted population is 4,255⁴. Because of the low population in the Subregion and high acreage of national forest and regional park lands and facilities, the need for additional park lands and facilities is anticipated to be minimal.

POLICIES

1. Through the cooperation of the San Diego County Parks Department and the Local Planning Organization Sponsor Groups, the necessary coordination should be established to ensure that the appropriate service level of recreational programs, park use, access and maintenance, and other services are provided. [DPR, DPLU]
2. So that Park Land Dedication Ordinance Funds may be used to develop local park facilities, encourage the creation of County Service Areas, alternative taxing agencies, or other organizations to provide ongoing park maintenance and operation services for each community requiring park facilities within the Subregion. [GEN]
3. Top priority for provision of local park facilities should be given to Ranchita, Santa Ysabel, and Sunshine Summit in order to serve the greatest number of residents and visitors to those communities. [DPR, DPLU]

³ SANDAG Profile Warehouse — <http://profilewarehouse.sandag.org/profiles/est/cocpa1951est.pdf>; August 2010

⁴ SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast for 2030, February 2010

Palomar Mountain:

4. Recreational land uses and facilities, such as outdoor amphitheaters, shall be restricted, on a case by case basis, to a capacity that will not adversely impact the character of the Palomar Mountain Community or the functional usefulness of the Palomar Mountain Observatory, and be limited to one such facility per project. [PP]
5. Encourage recreational uses shall be of a type and scale that is compatible with surrounding low density residential uses and undeveloped National Forest, State Park lands, and private holdings. [DPR, DPLU]

POLICY CODE EXPLANATION

The responsibility for carrying out the policies of this community/subregional plan does not lie solely with the Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU). The cooperation of private property owners, developers, decision-makers and numerous other entities, both public and private, is necessary to make these policies successful.

A code within brackets [] has been placed at the end of each policy within the Plan Text to identify which county department or sub-departmental section of the Department of Planning and Land Use is responsible for taking the lead in carrying out the policy. In addition, there is a code identified as "GEN", which indicates those policies that are of a general concern to all persons or groups that might be involved in development or plan implementation.

This approach will assist in providing detailed information regarding policies easier to locate, and aid staff in overseeing the progress of the plan.

CODE

GEN	POLICY OF GENERAL APPLICATION
DEH	DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
DPW	DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
DPR	DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
DHHS	DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
AWM	DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES
HCD	DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DPLU	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND USE
C	- Code Enforcement
PP	- Project Planning
AP	- Advanced Planning
B	- Building Division

APPENDIX

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREAS

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREAS (RCA)

The Resource Conservation Areas identified below are shown on Figure 3 at the end of this section on page 37.

125. Aqua Caliente Wilderness RCA

The Aqua Caliente Wilderness RCA is located in a roadless area of the Cleveland National Forest; north and east of Warner Springs and Sunshine Summit. It is bordered on the east by the Anza Borrego Desert State Park and the Los Coyotes Indian Reservation. At one time, this area was proposed as a national wilderness area by the federal government.

Elevation in this area varies from 3,200 feet to 5,000 feet. Resources to be conserved include vegetation characterized by undisturbed oak woodlands, Chamise chaparral, mixed chaparral, and isolated coniferous forests in the higher elevations. This pristine wilderness area supports a wide variety of wildlife, including many sensitive species that have declining populations in San Diego County.

124. Henshaw Basin RCA

Centrally located in the Subregion is the Henshaw Basin RCA, which is characterized by 48,000 acres of valuable watershed land of the San Luis Rey River that empties into Lake Henshaw. Surrounding Lake Henshaw, in the remaining basin, is characterized by vast expanses of grasslands and isolated oak woodlands. Most of the area is maintained as open space in order to protect the quality of the vast groundwater supply stored in the underlying sediments. Cattle grazing and limited agriculture occur as conditions permit. The large property is owned and operated by the Vista Irrigation District, which is a semi-public agency that supplies potable water to Vista and Escondido.

The grasslands contained in the Henshaw Basin RCA are important habitats for endangered species (Stephen's kangaroo rat), as well as raptor species, and should be protected.

123. Mesa Grande RCA

One of the most scenic areas in the North Mountain Subregion is the Mesa Grande RCA, which is located on the southwest corner of the Subregion from the San Luis Rey River on the north to the Ramona Community Plan Area on the south and to Mesa Grande in the east. The majority of the area is Cleveland National Forest with the exception of the area surrounding Mesa Grande. This area is a mountainous area with elevations over 5,000 feet. Resources to be conserved are included in the following description.

Geologically speaking, the Mesa Grande Area is one of the most unique in San Diego County. Gem bearing pegmatite is known to occur, producing tourmaline and topaz. Gem quality tourmaline is very rare, and San Diego

County is a world famous producer of that gem. Vegetation and wildlife in the Mesa Grande RCA is highly diverse. In the area surrounding Mesa Grande vast acreages of relatively undisturbed oak woodlands occur supporting a wide range of species. The oaks are characterized by Coast live oak (*Qagrifelia*), California black oak (*Q. Kelloggii*), and the Engelmann oak (*Quercus englenannii*), a Southern California endemic. Raptor species and large mammalian predators are found in such oak woodland habitat.

Further to the west is the Pauma Valley. Within the valley, rare riparian habitat occurs surrounded by steep chaparral covered slopes. The riparian habitat supports rare and endangered species, such as the least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii*). Grasslands and areas of coastal sage scrub are mixed within the riparian habitat. Coastal sage scrub habitats are dwindling in San Diego County as a result of development. Much of the Mesa Grande RCA is inaccessible and provides valuable undisturbed resources for future generations of San Diego County.

17. Palomar Mountain/Aqua Tibia Wilderness RCA

The Palomar Mountain and Aqua Tibia Wilderness areas are located in the northwest corner of the Subregion. As seen from the rest of San Diego County, the Palomar Mountain Area rises to 6,500 feet in elevation and is occasionally snow covered during the winter months. In the north, the area is bordered by Riverside County and access is limited to foot trails in the Aqua Tibia Wilderness. On the east, the area descends down the back side of Palomar and Aguanga Mountains to flat grasslands and scrub below. In the south, the area is bordered by the San Luis Rey River and Lake Henshaw. The western boundary is crossed by the Pala Pauma Subregion as the slopes of Palomar extend down in the neighboring subregion.

The Palomar Mountain Area is one of the most scenic areas in San Diego County. One of Palomar Mountain's most beautiful and unique resource, which requires conservation, is the Montane Coniferous forest and the related species which it supports. The Montane Coniferous forest is characterized by large trees and a well shaded understory. The forest is composed of Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), Jeffrey pine (*Rnui jeffreyi*), along with Big Cone Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga macrocarpa*), White fir (*Abies concolor*), and Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*). This type of forest is unique to Southern California and is supported by 36-45 inches of rainfall per year. Many sensitive and endangered species thrive in the Coniferous Forest. Reptiles, such as the California Mountain King snake, along with large mammals, mountain lions, and bobcats are known to inhabit the Palomar Area.

Due to the relatively high amount of rainfall received in the Palomar Area, groundwater resources are more abundant than elsewhere in the County. Precipitation falls in the form of rain and snow to recharge aquifers that are either tapped by wells or flow naturally out of local springs. Water quality is outstanding and there are private water companies who bottle and sell the

water throughout San Diego. It is important that this resource be properly maintained and preserved. If groundwater mining were to become common practice, groundwater supply for private property would be diminished and the sensitive montane ecosystem threatened.

Because the Palomar Area supports a great deal of diversity, Native American people populated the mountain area during the summer to sustain themselves through the dry periods in the valley below. They hunted game and processed acorns. Remnants of their camps can be seen on the mountain. Confined development on the mountain is important to preserve existing sites, as well as provide the opportunity for the discovery of new sites.

Due to the presence of astronomical dark skies, Palomar Mountain is home to the Palomar Mountain Observatory and the 200-inch Hale Telescope. The Observatory is one of the leaders in scientific research throughout the world. In order for the Observatory to continue prestigious scientific research, the dark sky must be protected from the effects of light pollution. Large development on Palomar should consider this multi-million dollar facility in order for its continued existence. Many other resources exist in the Palomar Mountain Agua Tibia Wilderness RCA. Among them, are timber resources (not for lumber), low ambient noise levels, mineral resources, as well as scenic and recreational resources. All of the rich diversity found in this area is one of the most valuable resources in San Diego County.

127. San Felipe Hills RCA

The North Mountain Subregion contains many unique resources that are rare in Southern California. As development occurs in the more populated areas, many of the more common habitats have been heavily impacted. It is important to recognize and preserve the remaining common undisturbed habitats.

The San Felipe Hills RCA is located in the eastern portion of the Subregion just northeast of San Felipe Valley. The area is characterized by a series of large hills reaching 4,000 feet in elevation. This roadless area contains undisturbed desert transition vegetation types that provide shelter for reptiles and desert birds. Sensitive species, such as the Coastal rosy boa and Desert bighorn sheep, along with many rare plants are likely to be found in the San Felipe Hills RCA.

128. Volcan Mountain RCA

Volcan Mountain, which is located in the southeast corner of the Subregion, rises 1,000 feet above Julian. The base of the mountain is bordered by Banner Creek, which flows south-eastward into Banner Canyon. Tall oaks, sycamores, poplars, and a lush riparian habitat line the stream. The steeply ascending canyon slopes are covered with thick stands of chaparral interspersed with grasslands that give way to a ridge-top woodland of Incense Cedar, pines, firs, oaks, and mountain meadows. The lower, more

easterly slopes support a desert-transition community of Creosote scrub. The path of the Elsinore Fault crosses the southern base of the mountain generally following the course of Banner Canyon and Banner Creek.

Protection of the well-developed riparian habitat, the steep and highly erodible slopes, and the canyon walls through which the Fault passes is urged. Likewise the beauty of the mixed evergreen forest, which is comprised of unusually large specimens, should be conserved. Sightings have been reported of the rarely seen Round-leaved Boykinia (*Boykinia rotundifolia* Parry), the Golden Fairy Lantern Lily (*Calochortus amabilis* Purdy), and the endemic Humboldt Lily (*Lilium humboldtii* var. *Bloomerianum*), and indicate the potential of a rich botanical presence.

The diversity of plant communities on Volcan Mountain provides foraging and nesting habitat to over 100 species of birds ranging from ducks and geese, to the sensitive spotted owl in the coniferous forest along with the colorful warblers and the ever-present juncos, chickadees, and nuthatches. Over the grasslands golden eagles, kestrels, and kites have been observed. The desert scrub and mesquite provide habitat for the cactus wren, the burrowing owl and the phainopepla. Habitat protection is essential to assure the continued presence of such a variety of birds.

Volcan Mountain's great size (20 square miles) covers, and is shared by both the North Mountain Subregion and the Julian CPA. It can be seen from almost any vantage point in the community. Its peaceful, silent beauty derives from the interplay of constantly changing shades of green produced by the component woodland and chaparral species growing on the steep slopes. Views from the mountain top are equally breathtaking. On clear days, broad vistas of the desert and the ocean unfold before the viewer. Volcan Mountain is held in very special regard by the surrounding communities as an area of exceptional beauty, and an area worthy of preservation for the benefit of generations to come.

For at least 1,000 years, Kumeyaay Indians occupied Volcan Mountain. Permanent and summer villages were strategically placed in canyons associated with Banner Canyon, Santa Ysabel Creek, and Dan Price Creek. Specialized food processing, religious observance, and hunting sites were located on ridge lines, terraces, and mesas, such as Simmons and Ferguson Flat.

Historically, mining, ranching, and lumber activity occurred in the Banner Creek and Volcan Mountain area. Mine shafts, ore crushers, stamp mills, and home sites remain as archaeological ruins and features. These and other landmarks have high historic and archaeological value.

126. San Ysidro Mountains RCA

Located on the eastern border of the Subregion, north of Ranchita, is the San Ysidro Mountain RCA. These mountains reach elevations in excess of 5,000 feet, and provide spectacular views of the desert floor below. Due to the elevation, this area received occasional snow and rains from easterly moving coastal storms. Enough rainfall supports stands of Coulter Pines among beautiful examples of desert plants. Desert Bighorn Sheep, whose habitat must be preserved, have been known to graze on the rocky slopes of these mysterious mountains.

